

ISLAM

Problem of evil: A price of good

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Besides man, the rest of the world is incredibly beautiful. One only has to look at the luxuriant bloom of a tree and the fragile tenderness of a flower; one only has to gaze at the spectacles of nature, on land and in space; so attractive will one find them that one will not wish to remove one's gaze.

But the world of man is a cruel and polluted world. Why this difference? The reason is that in the rest of the world, there is direct and total implementation of the will of God.

It is exactly as God wishes it to be. But to human beings, He has given freedom. By misusing his freedom, man has created strife on earth.

The terrible evil that occurs on earth is really the price of a wonderful good: that from this jungle of humanity those blessed souls should be picked out who, consciously and deliberately, surrender to God.

These are the ones who obey God on the basis of realism, not on the basis of compulsion.

Such souls stand out from the rest of humankind. They had the chance to deny the truth, but they did not do so; they were able to assume a high position for themselves, but they showed themselves content to occupy a rear seat, and give pride of place to God; they could have sought to consolidate their own power and interests, but they voluntarily relinquished all selfish aims, and sought to consolidate the truth alone.

Such souls could not be selected unless they were placed under conditions of total freedom.

Such conditions could not come into being unless the price of freedom—evil in the world of man—was also born.

The purpose of life is the selection of such noble souls.